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Työn nimi-Arbetets titel-Title
The State as an End in Itself: Connecting The Idea of the State, the Collapse of Political Authority in Somalia and the Failure of the United Nations Operation in Somalia 1992-1995

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Tiivistelmä-Referat-Abstract
The study examines the disintegration of political authority following the civil war in Somalia in the beginning of the 1990s and the United Nations peace operation in the country during the years 1992-95. On a more general level, the study is concerned with the phenomenon of "state collapse" in Africa, the international peace operations in these conflicts and the general failure of these operations to achieve peace. The aim is to understand why the international response to state collapse in Somalia has been the reconstruction of this state, and why this has been problematic for achieving peace given the reasons why it collapsed in the first place.
At a theoretical level, the study aims to connect these phenomena with the idea of the state which defines the international institutional context. A social constructivist approach is adopted to gain insight into the way ideas and power are involved in institutional structures.
The legitimacy of the state institution has long historical roots, which have not been considered when the model was transposed to post-colonial Somalia and this process is reproduced with the reconstruction of the Somali state following the civil war. The study finds that the UN aimed to reconstruct the state because of its interest in upholding the state system, but also because it was natural, as Somalia presented itself as an "anomaly" in the "state culture" and called for this response. The focus on the state was legitimated by the need to reconstruct it, but the specific features of the Somali conflict and its root causes were neglected. Hence, why the operation failed.
The sources used in the study include research on the Somali political culture and the civil war, research and UN documents on the peace operation in Somalia as well as evaluations of the operation mostly in the form of conference reports. The theoretical sources used are conceptual developments on African statehood and conflicts, the state sovereignty institution and a number of constructivist works in International Relations theory, sociology, social theory and the philosophy of knowledge.

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